

## HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 782

By DuBois

A RESOLUTION to recognize Dr. O. Rebecca Hawkins on the occasion of her retirement.

WHEREAS, it is appropriate that the members of this legislative body should honor those citizens who have performed with uncommon devotion and enthusiasm throughout their years of industry; and

WHEREAS, Dr. O. Rebecca Hawkins, president of Columbia State Community College, is one such estimable person who has served with distinction throughout her forty years in higher education before recently taking a much deserved retirement; and

WHEREAS, on December 2, 1996, Dr. Hawkins began her service as Columbia State's third President; she was formerly at Prince George's Community College in Maryland, where she served as Vice President of Advancement and Planning and, prior to that, Dean of the Business and Management Division; and

WHEREAS, throughout Dr. Hawkins's illustrious career at Columbia State, she increased access for underserved populations by opening two new campus locations and expanding two existing campus locations, by ushering rapid growth in online and accelerated course delivery methods, and by establishing partnerships with three universities to provide bachelors and masters degrees on Columbia State's campuses; and

WHEREAS, she increased enrollment by seventeen percent, established Columbia State's Office of Economic and Community Development, and led the reorganization of the Columbia State Foundation and expansion of the Foundation Board to be inclusive of the college's service area; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Hawkins launched and completed two very successful major gift campaigns, which raised more than \$8 million dollars, increased Foundation assets to \$6.8 million dollars, increased endowments to \$4.2 million dollars, awarded \$1.2 million dollars of

scholarships from private funds, and funded \$1.5 million dollars of college facility and program improvements from private funds; and

WHEREAS, she envisioned and established Columbia State as a cultural center for the performing and visual arts in southern Middle Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Hawkins is especially noted for her work to obtain funding in support of the creation of the Waymon L. Hickman Building on the Columbia campus; she oversaw the design and construction of the Hickman Building, which has a state-of-the-art performance hall and art gallery, training rooms for workforce development, art and music classrooms, and studios and practice rooms; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Hawkins's education credentials include a doctorate of philosophy in education from the University of Maryland, a master's degree in education administration from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, and a bachelor of science degree in marketing management from Virginia Commonwealth University; and

WHEREAS, she has lent her time and professional talents by serving two three-year terms as a commission member on the Criteria and Reports Committee for the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools; in addition, she is a member of the Presidents' Council of the Tennessee Board of Regents and recently served as Chair of the Tennessee Board of Regents community college presidents; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Hawkins is an active and important part of her community and profession, participating in numerous worthy organizations, including serving as an appointed member of the Board of Directors for First Farmers and Merchants Bank, as well as gaining an appointment to the Board of the Maury Alliance, to which she dedicated her time to the Executive Committee and the Business/Education/Community Council; and

WHEREAS, a dedicated public servant, Dr. Hawkins has served as a member of the Advisory Board for Maury Regional Hospital and stood as Chair of the Maury County Heart Walk for 2005; and

WHEREAS, she was an appointed member of the Board for the Girl Scouts Council of Middle Tennessee, gained appointment to the Friends of Girl Scouts for Columbia, served on the Executive Board of the Columbia Kiwanis Club, was selected as a member of the Maury Vision 20-20 Executive Board, served as a Board Member of the Boys and Girls Club of Maury

County, and rendered sterling service as the Chair of the First United Methodist Church's Administrative Council; and

WHEREAS, no stranger to awards or accolades, the distinguished Dr. Hawkins was most deservingly named to the *Williamson 25* list in 2004, and in 2005; and

WHEREAS, Dr. O. Rebecca Hawkins exemplifies the spirit and allegiance to family and community that are characteristic of a true Tennessean; and

WHEREAS, throughout her estimable career, she has demonstrated the utmost professionalism, ability, and integrity, winning the unbridled respect and admiration of her colleagues; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we extend to Dr. O. Rebecca Hawkins our heartfelt wishes for a happy and fulfilling retirement, thank her for her meritorious service to the citizens of Tennessee as President of Columbia State Community College, and wish her every continued success in her future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.